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DANCE-MUSIC IN THE SOUDAN.

M. ERNEST NOIROT, who recently accompanied Dr. Bayol, the eminent African explorer, on a scientific tour through the Bambouk and Fouta-Djallon regions, devotes a chapter of the interesting book he has just published on the subject of his expedition to the musical performances and choreographic exercises that obtain amongst the tribes inhabiting Timbuctoo. Fondness for music, and a surpassing passion for dancing appear to be leading characteristics of all the African negro populations, far more highly developed in the black races than in the tawny Arabs, who are however credited by physiologists with intellectual superiority over the full-blooded "niggers." It has been said by more than one African traveller of experience that "after sunset, the whole of black Africa begins to dance;" and, according to M. Noirot, this broad assertion is strictly founded upon facts. Certain tribes even—as, for instance, the Malinké of Bambouk—are not content with devoting their evenings to gyrations on the light fantastic toe, but organise morning and afternoon balls, at which those votaries of pleasure who have "danced all night till the broad daylight" revert to their favourite recreation with unabated zest. Amongst the black Mahomedans, dancing is confined to women and gryots—a sort of wandering minstrels, scorned but tolerated by the unco' pious negro Musulmans, who, like the Tenth Hussars in the days of the Prince Regent, "do not dance." Religious austerity prompts the Fouta marabouts, for instance, to prohibit dancing as an invention of the devil; whereas, the Fetish-worshipping blacks regards it as precisely the converse of diabolical, and, when a dance is started, every man Jack of them, from the local king to the prisoner awaiting consumption, may join it without suffering any loss of public consideration.

The Mamakono girls are amazingly keen on what the immortal Swiveller designated as "the mazy." A tap or two of the big drum, that plays such a leading part in African national music, suffices to summon them to the principal square of the village, where they dance till they drop, *lassata nondum satiate*. Throughout the Bambouk country open-air balls take place daily, even in the smallest negro hamlets, the orchestra consisting chiefly of tambourines and iron bells, whilst the spectators mark time for the dancers by clapping their hands. Heel and toe dancing is the exception, whilst contortions of the body, from the waist upwards, are the rule at these balls; but M. Noirot makes enthusiastic mention of some remarkably graceful evolutions with

scarves, which he saw executed by young girls, as symmetrical in form as the finest Greek statues, in certain Bambouk villages, the inhabitants of which struck him as being exceptionally emancipate from old-world traditions; for the scarf-dancers also indulged in waltzing à trois temps, quite as gracefully and languishingly as the belles of an European ball-room. In Senegambia the fashionable dance is called "Adamalis Foobeen," and contains figures which M. Noirot does not feel himself justified in recommending to be taught in the dancing-classes at French young ladies' schools, although, as he frankly confesses, "when the first spasm of surprise has passed off, one cannot help admiring the plastic attitudes of the dancers." The dance in question derives its name from the circumstance that the lookers-on, every now and anon during its performance, chant in unison the refrain "Adamalis Foobeen," whatever that may mean. Perhaps, when the general character of the dance is taken into consideration, it is just as well that M. Noirot does not explain the purport of this burden.

Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast; upon this point Noirot and Congreve are at one. The former writes:—"As soon as a gryot begins to twangle his guitar-strings, a silent and attentive throng gathers round him. But the negro's favourite element in music is sheer noise; and he holds the tom-tom in chief honour among instruments, by reason of this inborn predilection. It is a primæval sort of article; a slice of a tree-trunk, hollowed out and covered with ox-hide, tightly stretched by means of leathern thongs and wooden pegs. Throughout the Fouta-Djallon region the tom-tom is hemispheric in shape, some three feet in diameter, and is called *tabala*. There is only one in each village; it is kept by the chief in his own hut, and is a symbol of command. When used on the march, in time of war, two men carry it between them whilst a third beats it with two lumps of indiarubber attached to either end of an ox-hide thong. Its sound can be heard at a distance of from five to eight miles, according to the size of the tabala and the vigour of its ministrants." Here is a war-march of the Malinké, played upon the *Kora* (a 16-stringed harp) with *tabala* accompaniment obbligato.

S. *Tempo di marcia.*



Whilst the *tabala* is exclusively a ceremonial instrument, the ordinary tom-tom is utilised for popular recreation as well as for State business. It is smaller than the *tabala*, and shaped sometimes like an apothecary's mortar, sometimes like a churn; tom-toms used for accompanying dance-music are carried under the left arm and beaten with the right hand. By putting pressure on the thongs that connect the strips of hide at either end of the instrument the player can alter the tone and produce three or four different notes, following the lead of the solo performer on the *kodovo gowlo*, a rough caricature of the European guitar. The following is a specimen of the tunes executed on the latter instrument by the gryots, or native minstrels. It was played to Dr. Bayol and M. Noriot at Footooroon, by Bomaroo, a celebrated gryot of the Alfa Aggiboo tribe:—



Besides the *tabala* and *kodovo gowlo*, the negroes of Timbuctoo and Senegambia possess a third national instrument, called the "bambara" flute, a cane tube pierced with five holes in a haphazard sort of way, upon which, however, the gryots play with considerable skill and even a little execution, as will be seen by the second of the two subjoined flute *soli*, the *chefs-d'œuvre* of a renowned minstrel hight Dyali Foday, the "boss" flautist of a Bambouk town rejoicing in the compound designation of Tyairno-Mahadew.

No. 1.

No. 2.

The three instruments above described make up the sum total of the African orchestra, and with them local musicians manage to produce effects which, as the late Douglas Jerrold significantly remarked of his first grandchild, are more easily conceived than described. Nevertheless, M. Noriot

and his European companions, whilst listening to the performances of the gryots, who used to haunt their huts daily and nightly, whenever they made any stay in a Bambouk or Melinké town, were frequently surprised by the resemblance existing between the native songs and dances and certain old Breton tunes, as well as some of the "gigues" and "courantes" of the Rameau and Couperin period of French music. The accomplished traveller gives several examples of negro melodies, curiously illustrating the mysterious affinity that exists, in form as well as in inspiration, between the elementary musical compositions of Europe and Africa. I have chosen the following two for reproduction in the columns of THE LUTE. The first is an air of great reputed antiquity, which was played to M. Noriot on the *kodovo gowlo*, by Woppa (the Court musician of King Alfa-Mahamadon-Patey) at Sokotoro. The second, also stated to be a fine old crusted tune, was performed on the *bambara* flute by the gryot Bikiro Faddyghee, at a place called Kedoogoo-Tata. They are both plain-sailing, intelligible melodies enough; fifty years ago they would have passed muster at British fairs as old-fashioned hornpipes; now-a-days, with a little judicious management, they might readily (especially the second one) be converted into polkas or galops. There is intrinsically wilder stuff than this African music to be found enjoying unalloyed popular favour in Carpathian valleys and on the broad pusztas of the Lower Banat.

No. 1.

No. 2.

Specimen d'accomp.

According to M. Noriot, a sort of accompaniment to the *soli* executed on the *bambara* flute is achieved by the production of two discordant notes from the strings of the *kodovo gowlo*, or native guitar, struck by the thumb and second finger of the accompanist's right hand, while with three fingers of his left hand he verberates the tense sheep-skin which, stretched over an unbacked wooden frame, constitutes the body of that instrument, after the manner of the familiar banjo. Both *bambara* and *kodovo gowlo* are used for accompanying the choruses sung *unisono* by the Malinké and Bambouk women, which generally end (as in the subjoined specimen) with a short flute solo, and are far more barbaric in

character than the songs, dances, or instrumental soli of which examples have already been given.



WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

ORIGINAL BUSINESS.

PHILOSOPHERS have told us over and over again, in many words of varying sound, but of similar import, that it is difficult to make a beginning.

For those who desire to adopt the Music-hall Stage as a profession all difficulties have been smoothed away. The ambitious amateur who has satisfied his friends within his own circle, and who feels that his abilities are worthy of being recognised by a wider field, may take heart of grace, and at a preliminary outlay of twopence, may be armed with the means to satisfy his desires. "The Guide to the Music-hall Stage" for amateurs, compiled and written by two "professional authors," sets forth—at the price above-named—in plain, simple and ungrammatical language, the whole process which it is necessary or advisable to pursue in order to become a "Lion Comique," a "pleasing Serio-comic," a "fascinating Sentimentalist," a "Satirical stump orator," or to be distinguished in the announcements of the "pavilions," "elysiums," "paradieses," "edens," or "bowers," by the shortened form of his personal cognomen, apparently so dear to "artistes" of this quality. He may be "billed" as "Bobby," advertised as "Harry," or placarded as the "facetious Tommy, the laughing jackass." This remarkable book, which contains much that is instructive may be read with interest not only by those who "desire to adopt the music-hall as a profession," but also by eager and bewildered parents who are troubled with doubt and perplexity as to "what to do with their boys." There can be no question as to the profitable character of the venture, or as to the extensive fame attained by the successful in the ranks of music-hall "artistes." It is no uncommon thing for the favourites of these places to be engaged "to do two or three turns a night" at different temples of song. They keep their smartly appointed broughams and drive from place to place ready dressed for their "turns." They often earn as much money in a week as many a hard-worked professional man, whose knowledge has been acquired at much cost of time and money, can scrape together in three months.

How they learn their duties, what is the process by which they must acquire distinction is told by these experienced "professional authors" in their book. They are evidently not money-grasping

people, for they display the whole scheme couched in their own forcible and elegant language for the small charge of twopence.

Supposing the aspirant for fame has invested his twopence, he will read with pleasure, and with profit perhaps, the following "advice to beginners," which is distinguished by shrewdness, common-sense, and an experience of the needs not only of "amateurs," but also of the arena on which they seek to display their powers. "The one great thing required by persons wishing to adopt the stage is original business." It is very certain that a great many whom the stage has adopted, have not acquired this preliminary item. "Too many persons make a beginning by singing songs that have perhaps been made popular by some great artiste, the consequence is the public, instead of being interested, oft-times become bored by constantly hearing the same songs." The compilers of the Guide are considerably tender of the susceptibilities of the public, would that it had fallen within the scope of their work to analyse the feelings of the professional critic, who is often called upon to say something pleasant and new, concerning pieces that he has heard hundreds of times, as often, in fact, as the old woman had seen the Lord Mayor's show. But, to resume, "whereas if a beginner starts with original business, granting they are possessed of a fair voice to sing, the public will listen attentively for the simple reason that it is something they have never heard before, and if it should chance to be a song with a catchy chorus, the public take a delight in listening to it; the consequence is that the song becomes popular, and the singer becomes popular with it, and the reason the singer becomes popular is because the song has never been sung by anybody but him." This is the secret of success in "higher places" also. The compilers do not say, though it is possible that, like the Captain's parrot, they thought it all the more, that the interest of the public in the original song sung by the beginner, is strengthened by the fact that no standard of comparative criticism has been previously formed regarding it. The "artiste" who introduces the "original business" makes his own standard. Further, these genial and experienced guides, with a shrewd eye to business, state, "therefore beginners will find it cheaper to have original business of their own at the first onset; and to enable persons to purchase such songs, We are prepared to write new and original songs at the nominal sum of Five Shillings, including words and music."

Their kind and friendly advice, though intended for the undecided amateur in his choice of "original business," may also be made to serve other purposes. The ambitious aspirant for theatrical as well for musical honours might profit by the next piece of advice given by our authors when they say, "Another thing to be borne in mind is, never fly at too high a game when commencing." They give their reasons for delivering this warning. "Many an ambitious beginner has been discouraged through appearing at a large hall before they have had sufficient practice. There are several small halls at

almost every town in England where they engage beginners for one, two, and three nights a week, and the pay at these halls range from two shillings and sixpence up to five shillings per night. It is to these halls the beginners should confine themselves until such times as they feel competent to appear at a recognised music hall; and when competent, they should see the manager of whatever hall they are desirous of appearing at and ask him to grant a show one evening, which a general run of managers willingly do, and if their business suits, in nine cases out of ten it leads to an engagement."

This is not unlikely to follow if the tyro has been careful to acquire the "one great thing" needful, namely "original business." This, however, is not all. It is somewhat contradictory to find our "professional authors," next stating that after "the one great thing," "we now come to the most requisite thing," viz., confidence. "Without plenty of confidence no person can ever hope to gain a position on the music-hall stage; they may have plenty of talent, but want of confidence debars them from showing their talent to advantage." There is one comfort arising out of the sad reflection here suggested which may not daunt the spirits of those who intend entering the profession. If they have acquired some "original business," it is more than likely that the proud possession of this qualification may inspire them with the needful assurance without which success cannot be won. Like the pilot who points out dangers which his skill can overcome, our "professional authors" indicate the method of avoiding sad consequences to the *debutant* arising from want of confidence.

"And how is this want of confidence brought about? By simply reflecting too much upon the audience they have to appear before and how they will be received by them; whereas, if they would only devote their whole mind to what they have to do and how they are going to do it, and think of the audience as friends, who will make every allowance for a new beginner, they would find it greatly enhance their prospects of obtaining a footing as public performers." In other words, they must mind their own "original business."

Further hints of a most important character are given in this remarkable guide, for which no thanks can be too lavishly paid. The "professional authors" not only point out the requisite qualities needed for success, but they are also mindful of the fact that they are addressing a *clientèle* to whom "from two shillings and sixpence up to five shillings per night is the primary and handsome reward for their 'original business.'" They not only strive to save their feelings, but they desire also to be tender of their pockets.

"Many amateurs through the want of knowing how to go about the thing spend a considerable sum of money upon songs that are totally unsuited for their style. They are oft-times led by bogus advertisements announcing that they can be prepared for the stage, and songs found them on very reasonable terms; and what are those reasonable

terms? Simply this, they write them about two songs, which are very often old songs hashed up, and give them one lesson, and for this they will perhaps charge five or six guineas, and the consequence is that the amateur, very often finds that after laying out his money he is just as well off as when he started. And why is this? the answer is, they have placed themselves under people who are totally incompetent to teach because they have never been taught themselves." By this it would appear, if the statement is true, that the business of preparing amateurs for the stage is not only exceedingly profitable but that the professors are not lacking in "that most requisite thing, viz., confidence."

Concerning this most important matter our "professional authors" advise their readers never to place themselves under any tutor unless you have heard a good account of him." They further contend by a somewhat contradictory assertion, that "every amateur should bring himself out as far as comic or topical singing goes, and this is done by plenty of practice at small halls of amusement until they gain confidence and stage style." Is it not possible that many have been reading the book, with a view to other areas than the music-halls and that the much needed "stage style" has been sought to be obtained in some of the larger halls of amusement, at matinées, and so forth.

It is interesting moreover, to be told, if the thing were not self-evident, that "most of our great stars are self-taught men, and the same with our lady professionals; we advise amateurs to teach themselves. It only requires a firm mind to study your songs, and plenty of practice to sing them; by doing this, amateurs will find they can become self-taught, and also save great expense." There is much in these remarks which may be considered as forming the key to the peculiarities of the music-hall stage. Still, these canons are not all that need to be known by the ambitious amateur. Every one is advised "to consider the line you intend to adopt. Every beginner should endeavour to find out what particular line suits them best, and what they are the most capable of performing. Now a great many amateurs run away with the idea that to do a comic character only requires an old coat, an old hat, and a piece of red on the nose; but this is a grievous mistake. We wish to point out the fact that to become a comic character vocalist requires a keen conception of character and genuine flow of humour, and unless an amateur feels confident that he possesses these qualities, we advise him to sing quiet songs that only require an evening dress, or topical or motto songs." It is difficult to tell how this is to be done without further explanation, which, unfortunately, is not to be found in the book. There are, however, one or two hints of priceless value on another subject. "We will now point out the way amateurs should enter and leave the stage. Always allow the band to play the symphony over once, when they begin to play it the second time walk on with an easy, but upright, manner, and when you arrive at the footlights bow to the audience, when the band

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has finished playing the symphony start your song ; but be careful to start in the same key the band are playing. Always be careful in your articulation and pronunciation, and never hurry your singing, but let the audience understand the words of your song, and endeavour, by action, to show the meaning of the words ; if you have no idea of action, keep your hands and arms hanging in an easy but natural manner by your side. Should you chance to forget a word keep humming anything you may think of until you catch up your song again. When you are singing the last line of your song or chorus, gracefully recede towards the back of the stage, and when finished bow to the audience again, and walk off with head erect."

Here are golden rules indeed. What consideration for brother artistes is expressed in the hint "to sing in the same key the band are playing." How foolish they would look if this precaution were not observed. The public listening to "something they have never heard before" has a distinct sympathy with the new exponent of "original business," and, of course, would condemn the untuneful majority in their attempt to take advantage of the inexperience of the amateur's "easy upright manner."

How charming it is to find rules for the administration of comfort in the case of a lapse of memory. The audience, listening to the "careful articulation and pronunciation," would commend the subtlety of the device "to keep on humming anything." Such a proceeding would of course inspire a discriminating public with an equal amount of confidence to that possessed by the exponent of this "original business."

Material details are further furnished for the guidance of the beginner. He is told where and to whom to apply if he requires band-parts for his songs and the names and addresses of "very clever band-part arrangers, and the prices charged by them" are given. "The prices charged by these gentlemen are as follows :—

| | s. d. |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Five parts ... | 1 6 |
| Nine " | 2 6 |
| Pianoforte copy ... | 0 6 |
| Dictation from the Voice | 0 4 " |

The outlay of capital required in this "original business" is not ruinous, and the returns are considerable.

"Another very essential thing in the music-hall profession is dancing. Amateurs wishing to acquire the art of dancing we advise them to go to Messrs. May (of such and such an address) who teaches clog, sand and step dancing on very moderate terms, or if they wish to learn without the aid of a tutor they should send at once for the Clog and Step Dancing Instructor, published by them, post free 7d."

The "professional authors" also modestly let slip a reference to another of their accomplishments when they say : "We, as dancers, consider it the most perfect and easy guide ever written."

They also give information as to where "any

kind of nigger's dresses, dancing suits and wigs, nigger's big boots, and all kind of dancing clogs, old character clothes, tights of every description may be purchased." They guarantee engagements if proficient to any amateurs who place their names on the books by paying 2s. 6d., and in conclusion state that "amateurs cannot do better than place themselves under the tuition" of the "professional authors" (mentioned by name) when they will ensure good songs, catchy music, a careful preparation for the stage, and only reasonable terms. Hoping the "instructor" will benefit you all in the directions for which it is written. We remain, ladies and gentlemen, yours obediently, "The Professional Authors," (mentioned by name).

A number of original songs and "patters" are added to the "guide," so that the eager amateur, thus carefully prepared, may start at once.

Parents and guardians seeking anxiously for a new opening for their children and charges may find this guide worthy of their attention.

It will be necessary for them to take serious steps to secure the cultivation of the three things so much insisted upon, namely, "the one great thing," the advantages of which have been already fully detailed, "the most requisite thing, confidence," and the "very essential thing, dancing," to command success in this attractive, inexpensive, but potentially profitable "original business."

WM. BARRETT.

CIRCUSES AT HOME AND ABROAD.

THE English, who have a greater passion for horses and horseracing than any other nation in Europe seem, perhaps for that very reason, to care little or nothing for circus riding. Such, at least, appeared to be the case until quite lately; though now, with three circuses established in London, one of which is domiciled at one of our most important theatres, it may possibly turn out that this view is not correct. Hitherto, at all events, the circus has never occupied so good a position in London as in Paris, Vienna and Berlin, where it has long been not only a popular but also and above all a fashionable entertainment. The stables of a first-rate continental circus, like the *coulisses* of a first-rate continental theatre are frequented by the faster members of what is called "le big life;" some perhaps attracted by the horses, but the greater number by the fair equestrians who ride them and by the female acrobats who fly through the air, flinging themselves from swing to swing, during the intervals. At every important continental circus a break in the performances is the signal for the constant frequenters of the place to retire to what may be regarded as the horses' green-room. Here the occupants of the straw-littered stalls may be gazed upon, criticised and praised as freely as though they were nothing more than actors, vocalists, or dancers; and this without prejudice to the claims of their graceful riders. Our own Astley's, though the performances there were probably better than at any continental circus, was never the resort of fashion; and probably the

greater part of the pleasure-seeking youths who haunt the stalls of the opera (when we happen to have one) and of the Gaiety (which fortunately is always with us) know nothing about our quasi-historical circus beyond the fact of its being somewhere over the water.

At Vienna, the horse-loving Empress is a constant attendant at the Circus—the only theatre which really interests her; and we hear, from time to time, of some lovely ornament of the ring contracting at Vienna a marriage with a Hungarian or Bohemian magnate. At Paris, not very long ago, a great sensation and deep regret were caused by the death of a young circus-rider, whose sister had already married into a noble family, and who, at the time of the fatal accident, was about to follow that sister's example. Vocalists, actresses and even dancers have married well in England. But the line, in this country, seems to have been drawn at circus-riders; apparently for no other reason than because it has never been the fashion in England to encourage circus-riders of the best class. Those, at least, whom we now and then hear of as having made brilliant matches, have borne names quite unfamiliar to the English public. The practice, too, of riding an unsaddled steed and of standing erect on his back and cutting capers in the air as, like Mazeppa's horse, he "urges on his mad career," seems less artistic than dancing, though one is quite as dignified as the other, while the circus-rider has the advantage of the dancer in the matter of decency. The circus-rider, too, must be courageous as well as skilful. The circus-horse is in many cases a very tame, methodical sort of beast; but some of them have not only spirit but temper, and the accidents which from time to time take place in the circus are generally due to the viciousness of some unmanageable steed. It is difficult to look upon circus-riding as a lady-like occupation. But whether it is so or not depends, of course, on the character of those engaged in it; and to be done with skill and grace it requires higher qualities than are generally possessed by the actresses of burlesque or the so-called vocalists of British opera-bouffe.

The circus entertainments of antiquity were, it need scarcely be said, very different things from the generally harmless, bloodless exhibitions of the present day. Horse riding was no characteristic feature of the ancient circuses. But tight-rope dancing was, and Mr. Edouard Fournier, the learned and witty author of *Le vieux-neuf*, would tell us that the horse who is about to walk on the tight-rope at Covent Garden (unless he has already begun his performances) instead of doing anything new was only repeating what in the circuses of Rome was done by elephants. Regard, however, being had to the different conformation of the horse's and of the elephant's foot, the exploit must, one would think, be more difficult for the former than for the latter.

In the last century circuses seem to have been sufficiently well thought of in England to engage the attention of some very distinguished writers. We should look in vain to the works of (say) Tenny-

son, Carlisle or Herbert Spencer for any mention of circus riding as practised in the present day. Locke, however, in his "Conduct of the Human Understanding," invites attention to the wonder excited in the breast of ordinary persons by the performances at the circus of men who possess no greater power than themselves, but who have merely perfected themselves in their art by constant industry and application. Johnson, expressing almost the same idea, celebrated the virtues of a circus performer whom, before making him the subject of an elaborate encomium, he had just seen at his work; and Pope seems to have thought that the circus performers of his day would have astonished the playgoers of the classical period:—

" Could Rome but see us tumbling through a hoop!"

The equestrian performances of the modern circus were originated by Astley, a retired cavalry sergeant, who, after establishing the theatre on the other side of Westminster Bridge, which until quite recently bore his name, went to Paris and there founded the first circus in which horse-riding formed the chief feature. Circus performances in France have shown a tendency to take the form of *spectacle* just as in spectacular pieces horses are sure to find their way. Meyerbeer committed the fault of introducing horses into his spectacular operas, which caused the suggestion to be made that above the Paris Opera-house should be placed this inscription: "Ici on joue l'opéra à pied et à cheval." Wagner, who in his early days was an imitator of the composer whom in after years he was to vilify, mounted Rienzi in the principal scene of the opera of that name, even as Meyerbeer in *Les Huguenots* had mounted Queen Margaret. Curious stories are told both of the horse which bore Rienzi at Her Majesty's Theatre and of the one which carried Queen Marguerite de Valois many years before at the Royal Italian Opera. The latter was called Becky Sharp and had at one time been the property of Mr. Thackeray. The former bore no historic name, and he misbehaved himself by running away as an attempt was being made one morning to get him through the stage door with a view to a rehearsal. Nor was he caught until two days afterwards, when, fallen from his high degree, he was found at Whitechapel in the shafts of a ratcatcher's cart.

SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

THE legions who patronise oratorio at the Albert Hall cannot complain that Mr. Barnby's programme this season is lacking in variety. That astute conductor is sandwiching the new and the old in a very clever way. He starts with what may be termed a tremendous novelty in *Parsifal*, and then with *Elijah* heals the Amfortas-like wound which Wagner's music drama has left open. To *Elijah* succeeds Berlioz's *Damnation de Faust*—a masterpiece that now appeals with more or less force to every class of amateur; after which lovers of the purely orthodox enjoy a double turn with the *Messiah* and *Creation*. Looking ahead, we find modern oratorio next to the fore in the shape of *The Rose of Sharon*, an unexpected performance wherof is underlined for February 4. We happen to know that two or three months ago Mr. Barnby had not the slightest intention of including Mackenzie's work in the repertory of the current season. Its sudden choice, therefore, is not only a tribute to the fast-growing popularity of *The Rose*, but a proof of the conductor's confidence in the capacity

of his forces to become quickly proficient in music, which is anything but easy. Reverting, once more, to work accomplished, we may praise, without reservation, the welcome performance of Haydn's *Creation*, given on the 14th ult.—welcome, it would seem, in an unusual degree, judging by the thousands who braved wind and weather to listen to a popular oratorio that has been given rarely, of late, in the metropolis. To the Albert Hall choristers Haydn's suave numbers presented little difficulty, and their singing was marked throughout by the highest degree of precision, delicacy and intelligence. Mrs. Hutchinson's refined art lent due expression and charm to the soprano music, while that for baritone had a matchless interpreter in Mr. Santley. The tenor solos were adequately rendered by Mr. Charles Wade, who is endowed with a pleasing but not powerful organ, which he uses with considerable taste. Mr. Barnby's orchestra was up to its accustomed mark, and Dr. Stainer officiated at the organ in irreproachable style.

SOME interesting programmes have been provided by Mr. Chappell since the resumption of his genuinely Popular Concerts. On January 25 the attractiveness of favourite quartets by Beethoven and Haydn was enhanced by the production of a Sonata in C major for violoncello and pianoforte, by that great artist, Alfredo Piatti. Although not recently written, the composition bears the Opus number 28. It is replete with graceful melody, chiefly allotted, of course, to the instrument which the composer caresses with such a master hand; apart from this pervading charm some peculiarities of form and the unusually extensive employment of the principal theme in the opening allegro strike the hearer as noteworthy. The sonata was admirably rendered by Signor Piatti and Madame Haas, and received with unwonted expressions of approval. The lady just mentioned also won hearty applause for her neat, facile execution of Liszt's arrangement of an organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor, by Bach. On the following Monday a welcome reappearance was made by Madame Essipoff, who was heard in a triad of solos, embracing Mendelsohn's Prelude in E minor, Op. 35, Chopin's Nocturne in D flat, Op. 27, and a Mazurka by Godard, in B flat, Op. 54. In each of these pieces Madame Essipoff exhibited characteristic mastery over the key-board, and perfect grace of style, allied with a tender expression or brilliancy of manipulation that was invariably in accord with the spirit of the composition. If not so successful in a trio by Rubinstein, played here for the first time, the fault rested less with the gifted Russian lady than with her compatriot's work, which proved not only dull and diffuse, but so written that the pianoforte fairly drowns the violin and 'cello amid a din of constant cadenzas and noisy florid passages of the unmistakable *virtuoso* type. Mrs. Hutchinson's refined singing was a pleasant feature at this Concert. On the 19th a new candidate for honours as a pianist came forward in the person of Mr. Max Pauer, a son of the well-known professor, who was himself not long since a distinguished figure on this same scene. Mr. Pauer is barely out of his "teens," yet already an exultant of strong artistic instincts and unquestionable skill. These qualities he demonstrated in a composition that demands no mean combination of gifts—the Beethoven Pianoforte Sonata in A flat, Op. 110; giving an interpretation in which sound training, unfailing intelligence, and easy mastery of mechanical difficulties made their due impression. The *débutant* gained a most encouraging reception,

and, in response to demands for an encore, played a Capriccio by Beethoven with such facility and charm as to win him another cordial round of applause. He was also successfully associated in concerted works with Madame Norman-Néruda and Signor Piatti. At the Saturday Concerts of the 17th and 24th, Madame Essipoff again appeared; while on Monday, the 26th, Dvorák's Trio in F minor, Op. 65, was included in the scheme, Mr. Charles Hallé this time taking the pianoforte part.

As yet the concert season can hardly be said to have begun. January is a quiet musical month; it constitutes the lull before the six months' storm with which we are now inevitably visited. Mr. Boosey has given one evening and two morning Ballad Concerts since Christmas, in the programme of which he has depended upon familiar songs rather than novelties for the delectation of his numerous patrons. The result has proved his wisdom, especially as the new ballads that have been introduced are rather above than below the average, save in one or two instances which time may be left to indicate. On the 21st ult., Mr. Boosey drew the greater portion of his selection from a safe and popular source—the songs of Sir Arthur Sullivan. Among these were such favourite compositions as "Orpheus with his Lute," "Where the Bee Sucks," "The Lost Chord," "Once Again," and "If Doughty Deeds," while the list of artists comprised Madame Trebelli, Miss Agnes Larkcom, Miss Mary Davies, Madame Antoinette Sterling, Mr. Maas, Mr. Maybrick and Mr. Santley. The anniversary of Burns's birthday was musically commemorated with characteristic enthusiasm and success, on the 24th, at St. James's Hall, and on the 26th at the Albert Hall. To dwell at any length upon the Promenade Concerts, à la Jullien, commenced at Her Majesty's Theatre on Boxing Night would be a waste of time and space. As we write, this unprofitable enterprise has dragged through its fourth week of existence, at a period of the year when Promenade Concerts may be said to have no chance whatever. However excellent the intentions of the promoters may be, it is impossible for them to prosper just when pantomimes and circuses hold undisputed sway over the general public. Nor is it to be denied that in this instance the name of Jullien has been slightly taken in vain.

A KNOTTY point has been raised by an American paper. To what country does Colonel Mapleson belong? He commands a regiment in England and an operatic company in America—therefore, whose citizen is he? As our contemporary remarks, "It is hard to view Colonel Mapleson in the light of a traitor to his country. But if war broke out between England and the United States what would he do? Would he throw up the command of his regiment in the former or the command of his operatic company in the latter? England without Colonel Mapleson would have no weight as a military power. It might survive the loss of Wolseley, Roberts, and the Royal Dukes. Without Mapleson it would perish. Americans, again, if deprived of their Italian opera, might sink to the level of savages. Dr. Damrosch and Mr. Theodore Thomas are luxuries. Colonel Mapleson is a necessity." The only way to settle such an intricate question is by employing the modern panacea for all political ills—a Conference. Otherwise the American Government may attempt to annex the Colonel, and we might be driven to extremes to retain possession of so valuable an ornament to the British Crown.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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THE LUTE.

LONDON, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1885.

A VOICE FROM THE FAR WEST.

An American contemporary, called *The Musical Courier*, after quoting the letter from M. Gounod published recently in our columns, makes some remarks upon it and its subject, which we quote at

length. Our American, or rather Yankee-German critic, says:—

"Now, how much more manly would Gounod have acted had he, as everybody can read between his lines, straightforwardly acknowledged that the English are *not* a musical nation. We recently took occasion to point this out as far as their musical taste is concerned, when we mentioned their preference for Händel over Bach, and for Mendelssohn over every other composer. This might be supplemented with the fact of their enthusiastic admiration for so weak and drivelling a work as Gounod's *Redemption*, of their knighting a musical rhinoceros like George Grove, and, last, of their addressing a question to Gounod, of all men, to find out whether they are musical or not. All of this, of course, is in bad taste, but bad taste alone would not stamp the English as an unmusical nation. If we maintain, as we do, that the English are not a musical nation, we do so on the grounds that a nation in order to be called musical must be musically *productive*. Now, it is an acknowledged fact that England so far has not produced a single great composer. She has given us good musicians, people who by force of application have learned how to write well in four or more parts, and who have become intimate with the fascinations of complex counterpoint. But men with truly great musical ideas or inspirations cannot be pointed out among the English, and to the question, 'Where is their Beethoven, their Wagner, their Mozart, their Schumann, their Schubert, their Berlioz, their Verdi,' not to mention any lesser lights, echo will invariably answer, 'Where?' The only two exceptions which probably might have been used to prove the correctness of the rule that the English are musically non-productive, would have been Purcell, had he not died at the age of thirty-seven and when in the midst of his labours, and Sullivan, had he not preferred to strive to become the English Offenbach, instead of the English Mendelssohn. Ireland adjoining has produced three of the best known composers of Great Britain, Wallace, Field and Balfe, but they can only by mistake be classed as *English* composers; and among the most promising of living writers in Great Britain is Mackenzie, who is a Scotchman by birth."

Our Transatlantic contemporary appears to be painfully exercised by the circumstance that we ventured, some two months ago, to address a question to M. Charles Gounod "of all men"—why of all men, we would ask?—with a view to ascertaining whether or not that eminent composer considered the English to be a musical people. In so doing, according to the *Musical Courier*, we committed a breach of good taste, and provoked a condemnable display of unmanliness in M. Gounod, whose reply to our enquiry is interpreted as inferring an opinion which he lacked courage to express in plain terms. It seems to us that the taste which suggested to our contemporary such an interpretation of M. Gounod's entertaining letter was not of absolutely first-rate quality, although in perfect keeping with the tone of the remarks that follow it. That a writer who qualifies the *Redemption* as a "weak and

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Words by
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Allegro Agitato $\text{J} = 144$.

PIANO.

pp cres.
ff
Ped

p cres.
Ped

Basses and Tenors in Unison.

A Chief - tain to the High - lands bound, Cries

p cres.
Ped * Ped *

"Boat - man, do not tar - ry! And I'll give.....thee a
 sil - - ver pound To row us o'er the fer - ry"

Ped * Ped * Ped

*Solo Tenor or Alto.
Meno mosso.*

"Now, who be ye would cross Loch gyle, This

Meno mosso d=88.

Solo Bass.

dark and stor - - my wa - ter!" "Oh! I'm the Chief of

Basses & Tenors
in Unison.

Ul - - va's Isle, And this Lord Ul - lin's daughter. And

Tempo primo.

fast before her fa - - ther's men Three days we've fled to -
cres.
p *Tempo primo.*

Ped * Ped * Ped *

- ge - ther; For, should he find us in the glen, My

Ped * Ped * Ped *

blood would stain the heather His horse - men hard be -
cres.

Ped * Ped * Ped *

hind us ride; Should they our steps dis - cov - er, Then
 Ped * Ped * Ped *

who will cheer my bon - ny bride When they have slain her
 Ped * Ped * Ped *

Solo Tenor or Alto.
Tempo seconda.

lov - - er?" Out spoke the har - dy is - land
 Ped *

Tempo seconda ♩ = 88.

wight, I'll go, my Chief - I'm rea - dy:- It is

not for your sil - ver bright; But for your win - - - some

la - dy; "And by my word, the bon - ny bird In

dan - ger shall not tar - ry; So, though the waves are raging

white, I'll row you o'er the fer - ry So

though the waves are rag - ing white, I'll

rall.

row you o'er the fer - ry.

rall.

pp accel e cres. Ped

Alto.

Tenor.

By this the storm grew loud a

1st Bass.

By this the storm grew loud a

2nd Bass.

By this the storm grew loud a

By this the storm grew loud a

Tempo primo $\text{♩} = 144$.

pace..... The wa _ ter-wraith the wa _ ter-wraith was
 pace..... The wa _ ter-wraith the wa _ ter-wraith was
 pace..... The wa _ ter-wraith the wa _ ter-wraith was
 pace..... The wa - - - ter-wraith was

shrieck - ing And in the scowl of heav'n and in the scowl of
 shrieck - ing And in the scowl of heav'n and in the scowl of
 shrieck - ing . And in the scowl of heav'n and in the scowl of
 shrieck - - - ing And in the scowl of

Ped If more convenient the lower notes of the octave passages may be substituted.

heav'n each face grew dark And in the scowl the scowl of
 heav'n each face grew dark And in the scowl the scowl of
 heav'n each face grew dark And in the scowl the scowl of
 heav'n each face grew dark And in the scowl the scowl of
 heav'n each face grew dark each face grew

 Ped *

 heav'n each face grew dark as they were speaking. But
 heav'n each face grew dark as they were speaking. But
 heav'n each face grew dark as they were speaking. But
 dark each face grew dark as they were speaking. But

 Ped * Ped * Ped * Ped * Ped *

still as wilder blew the wind, And as the night grew
 still as wilder blew the wind, And as the night grew
 still as wilder blew the wind, And as the night grew
 still as wilder blew the wind, And as the night grew

Ped * Ped * Ped *

drear - er A down the glen rode arm - ed men, Their
 drear - er A down the glen rode arm - ed men, Their
 drear - er A down the glen rode arm - ed men, Their
 drear - er A down the glen rode arm - ed men, Their

P & W. 1029. Ped * Ped

trampling sound _ ed near A down the glen rode arm _ ed
 trampling sound _ ed near A down the glen rode arm _ ed
 trampling sound _ ed near A down the glen rode arm _ ed
 trampling sound _ ed near A down the glen rode arm _ ed

* Ped

men Their tramp _ ling sound _ ed near _ er.
 men Their tramp _ ling sound _ ed near _ er.
 men Their tramp _ ling sound _ ed near _ er.
 men Their tramp _ ling sound _ ed near _ er.

* Ped

accel.

Alto Solo.

Agitato $\text{d} = 184$.

“ Oh! haste thee, Oh! haste!” the

accel.

Agitato $\text{d} = 184$.

* Senza Ped

la - - - dy cries, “ Tho’ tempests round us gather tho’

tempests round us ga - ther, I’ll meet the rag - - ing

of the skies, But not an an - gry fa - ther.

rall.

dim.

slowly.

Basses and Tenors in Unison.

f Tempo primo.

The boat has left a stor - - my land A

f Tempo primo $\text{♩} = 144$.

stor - - my sea be - - fore her, — When, oh! too strong for

hu - - man hand, The tem - - pest ga - - ther'd o'er her. And

still they row'd a - midst the roar Of wa - - ters fast pre-

Lord Ul - - lin reach'd that fa - - tal shore, His
 Lord Ul - - lin reach'd that fa - - tal shore, His
 Lord Ul - - lin reach'd that fa - - tal shore, His
 vail - - ing, Lord Ul - - lin reach'd that fa - - tal shore, His
 rall. dim. Slowly $\text{d} = 72$.
 wrath was chang'd to wail - - - ing For sore dismay'd thro'
 rall. dim. pp
 wrath was chang'd to wail - - - ing For sore dismay'd thro'
 rall. dim. pp
 wrath was chang'd to wail - - - ing For sore dismay'd thro'
 rall. dim. pp
 wrath was chang'd to wail - - - ing For sore dismay'd thro'
Slowly $\text{d} = 72$.
 rall. dim. pp Unaccompanied.
 Ped * Ped *

mf

storm and shade, His child he did dis - cov - er: One
 storm and shade, His child he did dis - cov - er: One
 storm and shade, His child he did dis - cov - er: One
 storm and shade, His child he did dis - cov - er: One

love-ly hand she stretch'd for aid, And one was round her lov.er.
 love-ly hand she stretch'd for aid, And one was round her lov.er.
 love-ly hand she stretch'd for aid, And one was round her lov.er.
 love-ly hand she stretch'd for aid, And one was round her lov.er.

1st Bass.

Appassionata ♩ = 126.*rall.*

Come back! come back! he cried in grief, A - cross this stor - my water; And
Appassionata ♩ = 126.

rall.

*a tempo.**rall.*

I'll forgive your High-land Chief, My daughter!— Oh! my daughter!"

Andantino più lento $\text{♩} = 69$.

'Twas vain: the loud waves lash'd the shore, Re-turn or aid pre-venting; The
 'Twas vain.... vain vain vain
 'Twas vain.... 'twas vain vain vain
Andantino più lento $\text{♩} = 69$.

all in vain all in vain
 waters wild went o'er his child And he was left la-menting, 'Twas
 all in vain in vain 'Twas
 all in vain in vain 'Twas

◆ The Alto and two Bass parts to be sung as softly as possible to the end.

The Pause on the word "vain" to be of short duration.

rall.

rall.

rall.

rall.

rall.

pp

drivelling" work, Sir George Grove as "a musical rhinoceros," and Sir Arthur Sullivan as "the English Offenbach" should feel called upon to reproach us—or anybody else, for that matter—of bad taste, is a diverting illustration of the scriptural parable in which the advisability of self-introspection is so pointedly inculcated. The question we put to M. Gounod was not prompted, as the *Musical Courier* incorrectly assumes, by any doubt on our part of the English people's innate musicality, which appears to us uncontested; but by the conviction that the great French composer's views upon the subject could not fail to prove interesting to the musical public of this country. That they did so has been demonstrated to our entire satisfaction in many several ways.

In his reply M. Gounod gave us to understand that, as far as he could judge, the English were neither more nor less musical than other peoples, music being an integral element of human nature; and that he personally had every reason to congratulate himself upon the reception accorded to his own compositions in England. Between this frank expression of opinion and the disadvantageous insinuation ascribed to him by the *Musical Courier* there is a difference which we may safely leave to the appreciation of our readers. Not even by implication does M. Gounod dispute the musicality of the Anglo-Saxon people. It was perhaps scarcely to be expected that he would place England in the front rank of musical nations; but at least he displayed no disposition to endorse the silly and unfounded prejudice which obtains abroad—especially amongst Germans on either side of the Atlantic—to the effect that Englishmen, as a race, are unmusical. With this prejudice our New York cotemporary appears to be profoundly imbued. It is the outcome of ignorance, and therefore calls for pity rather than reprobation. American journalism, even when professing to be specialistic, as in the case of the *Musical Courier*, is nothing if not sensational. In this respect it is possibly more diverting than our own; but the *ad captandum* style that is so popular in the States too frequently stands those who practise it in stead of solid knowledge or even correct information. We do not propose to refute so frivolous a misstatement as that in which our cotemporary asserts that "men with truly great musical ideas or inspirations cannot be pointed out among the English;" such patent absurdities as this and others quoted above carry with them their own refutation to any intelligent student of English music in the past or present. History testifies abundantly to the fact that the art of music was highly cultivated in this country more than a century before John Sebastian Bach imparted that magical impulse to its development in the Fatherland which, until a comparatively recent date, gave the German school of composers just precedence over all its European cotemporaries. We doubt whether any living German composer can be favourably compared to Arthur Sullivan, either for musical invention or construction; and it is noteworthy that

operas by Mackenzie and Goring Thomas have been more favourably received in Germany than works of a similar class owing their genesis to native talent. Finally, we would remind the *Musical Courier* that "calling names" proves nothing. It is just as easy, and probably quite as correct, to designate an anonymous American journalist as an impudent ape, as to describe an erudite English musical critic as a rhinoceros. Fortunately, however, good manners exercise a more wholesome and effective restraint upon writers for the press in this country than is the case in the land of Hannibal Chollup and Birdofredum Sawin'.

"FIVE-AND-TWENTY years ago," Madame Patti made her first appearance in opera in New York. Now she is there once more as fresh and gifted and young as ever. No wonder, then, that the hospitable New Yorkers celebrated the event by a banquet, to which came all the chief musicians, amateurs and journalists of Manhatta, and over which Judge Daly presided and Colonel Mapleson beamed. The Judge eulogised the fair guest of the evening in a set speech, and Mr. William Winter and Dr. Damrosch had a singularly inappropriate contest over the merits of Wagner. After this came the Colonel, and we are told that the adjectives he employed "would have delighted the heart of a sensational novelist, and turned Ouida green with envy." After some time of this sort of eloquence "Madame Patti beamed upon the gallant Colonel, who glowed with enthusiasm and champagne, as he sat down." Max Maretzek followed with an anecdote of Madame's "'first musical effort in return for a consideration.' She had been requested by her mother to sing to some friends who were present. She replied to the request by asking: 'What will you give me if I do?' She was asked what she demanded. 'Well, gentlemen,' continued Mr. Maretzek, 'she did not ask a thousand dollars for her song, but she made a more humble, though very resolute, request for a hatful of bonbons. We had some difficulty in getting these bonbons, but until we did get them we got no song.' The banqueters laughed heartily over this reminiscence of youthful precocity, and Mdme. Patti gazed affectionately upon the speaker as one gazes upon a relic of the past." No wonder that the *diva* said as she retired that "she had enjoyed herself immensely."

At a meeting of the Medical Society of London, held last month, Mr. Lennox Browne read a highly instructive paper on "The Influence of Alcohol and Tobacco in Relation to Voice Use," in the course of which the eminent specialist put forward an interesting series of statistics gathered by him from male professional vocalists, to the number of nearly four hundred, two-thirds of whom were habitual partakers of alcoholic stimulants, whilst the remaining third consisted (all but twenty-five who admitted indulgence in "modest quenchers") of total abstainers. It appears that 33 per cent. of the songsters who believed in the efficacy of strong liquor as an aid to voice-production pinned their faith to stout, whilst other 25 per cent.—chiefly cathedral chorists—found it requisite and necessary to whet their whistles chronically with the wine of Oporto, such as churchmen love. The rest took their liquors "permisus-like," or, as Mr. Browne happily put it, "according to pleasure and opportunity." The lecturer, whose experience in the treatment of singers' ailments is probably unequalled (it will be remembered that he is Surgeon to the

Royal Society of Musicians), strongly advised all professional vocalists to abstain from stimulants, at least until after the completion of their work. Taking into consideration the fact that many singers suffer from nervous indigestion and are compelled to take food some hours before the time at which they are required to perform, he deemed it sometimes advisable that they should drink a small quantity of alcohol with the meal preceding their vocal production. Moreover, as their public duties generally occupied them at an advanced hour of the evening, and as the healthy use of the voice invariably created lively appetite, necessitating late suppers, he regarded alcoholic stimulants, taken in connection with those particular meals, as allowable for the double purpose of aiding digestion and of acting as a light substitute for excessive solid food. As, however, the statistics recited by Mr. Browne satisfactorily demonstrated that a large number of public singers was enabled to do without stimulants altogether, he pointed out that all vocalists, at the outset of their career, should be made to understand that their vocation neither necessitated nor excused indulgence in alcohol. Mr. Browne denounced the use of tobacco as unquestionably pernicious to the throat and to the voice, and finally received the thanks of the meeting for, to quote Dr. Norman Kerr's words, his "able, exhaustive and most interesting paper." The lecture will shortly appear in print, and may be cordially recommended to the perusal of amateur, as well as of professional vocalists, not only as useful but as most entertaining reading; for it teems with amusing anecdote, as well as with sagacious advice.

THE announcement of a series of "American" concerts cannot but raise speculations as to what constitutes nationality in music. At a concert announced as Italian one would naturally look for Italian music sung by Italian singers; and similarly at a German or an English concert specially so described one would expect both the compositions and the executants to be at the latter English, at the former German. At Mr. Milbourne's American concerts, however, of which the first took place on the 23rd January, the performers alone are American; and it is remarkable enough that it should have been found possible to collect so many meritorious artists of American nationality. In time, perhaps, it will be possible to arrange a concert at which the music shall be exclusively the work of American composers. Meanwhile it was a happy idea on the part of Mr. Milbourne to call public attention to the richness of his native land in vocalists and instrumentalists of ability. The American singers, however, who appeared at the concert of the 23rd form but a small proportion of those who, coming from the United States, have made a high reputation in England. The claims of the Americans to Adelina Patti can scarcely be looked upon as valid, though the great *prima donna* passed much of her youth in New York, living there in fact from the age of three to seventeen or eighteen. Albani, again, though she belongs to the American continent, was born in Canada, not in the United States, and has always been an English subject. The States of the American Union have produced, however, apart from Patti and Albani, a remarkable number of admirable vocalists, including Miss Clara Louisa Kellogg, Miss Minnie Hauk, Miss Emma Thursby, Mrs. Osgood, Mme. Antoinette Sterling, Miss Hope Glenn and Miss Griswold—who of those we have just mentioned was the only one that appeared at the concert of the 23rd. Miss

Lena Little and other artists who took part in the concert possess abundant merit, but the American vocalists of well-established reputation were represented only by Miss Griswold.

THE late M. Edmond About, like every distinguished novelist in France, had written for the stage; and his story of *Germaine*, presented both in narrative and in dramatic form, was at one time spoken of as the subject of an opera, though it was never, we believe, actually set. He had produced very little of late years. But his earliest and best works were distinguished by great literary qualities, and by an entire absence of the grossness and animalism by which the masterpieces of the so-called "naturalistic" school are marked. A delicate humourist, he differed in the most striking manner from M. Zola, who with all his talent for coarse description of things as they are, has neither humour nor, above all, delicacy. The first of About's works to attract general attention was his *Tolla*, which owed not, indeed, its literary success, but a portion of its notoriety, to a long discussion in the French newspapers as to whether the author was indebted for the plot of the story to his own invention or to some foreign source. Without having proclaimed it beforehand, M. About admitted, when he was brought to book, that he had borrowed his subject from the work of a modern Italian novelist. But—as in more than one analogous case by English novelists of good repute—M. About had entirely re-written the story; and had thus, so far as literary expression was concerned, made it his own. M. About might have said at the end of his work, as Boccaccio says at the end of several of his tales, "This has been told in another way." But it probably occurred to him that by so frank an admission he would damage himself in the eyes of readers, not in the present day accustomed to so much candour. *Le Roi des Montagnes*, in which the hero is a Greek brigand with a banking account at Paris, is original in the fullest sense of the word. So also is *Germaine*, which (owing, no doubt, in some measure to the success it met with as a play) has obtained more readers than any other of his works. The story of *Germaine* is a highly ingenious development in dramatic form of the proposition said (by M. About) to be scientifically true, that doses of arsenic sufficient to kill a person in sound health will cure a person in a consumption. A consumptive heroine who, at the beginning of the story seems to be on the point of death, goes on living until a villainous rival determines to poison her. For this purpose she hires some Levantine assassin who, getting himself engaged as a servant in the young woman's family, begins by administering arsenic in small quantities which he gradually increases with the effect of making her gradually improve in health until at last a few doses of extra strength restore her to her normal condition. This tragic story borders constantly on the ludicrous, though without ever crossing the limit. One might, all the same, class it with M. About's story of the man who got his ear broken when it was in a frozen condition and became known as *L'homme à l'oreille cassée*; and of the notary who lost his nose in a duel and replaced it by a natural artificial one cut from the arm of a man who afterwards took to drinking with the effect of reddening in a most compromising manner the nose worn by the highly respectable notary.

M. ABOUT was more successful as a writer of short tales than as a novelist in the ordinary sense of the word; though his social sketches published under

the title of *Les Maringes de Paris* are certainly animated by the novelist's spirit. They are full of nice observations, and contain some of the author's best attempts at character painting. Apart from this collection, M. About's most successful tales are generally based on some fanciful or grotesque idea which will surely bear being set forth at great length; and with the exception of *Germaine* not one of his stories possessed dramatic substance. Naturally, then, his work for the stage was unsuccessful; and if *Germaine*, by exception, obtained a long run, this can be explained not only by the exceptional fitness of the subject for theatrical presentation, but also by the fact of his having been assisted in preparing it for the boards by a highly experienced playwright. As a journalist and a pamphleteer, M. About enjoyed a high reputation, apart altogether from his labours as a writer of fiction; and his excellent work entitled *Le Progrès* forms a permanent interest such as cannot, of course, be claimed for *La Question* or even *La frère Contemporaine*.

To the musical intelligence and enterprise of Bernardo Pollini, the impresario of the Hamburg Town-Theatre, Germany owes the revival of Carl Maria von Weber's earliest opera, *Silvana*, originally brought out at Freiberg on November 24, 1800, and reproduced on the banks of the Alster about a fortnight ago. Weber was only fourteen years old when he composed this charming work, unfortunately to a libretto no less absurd than those to which, in later years, some of his most enchanting music was written. The ridiculous "book" was, in all probability, the cause of the unfavourable reception *Silvana* met with at the hands of the Saxon public eighty-four years ago. Provided with a brand-new and very taking libretto from the pen of the experienced dramatist Ernest Pasqué, of Darmstadt, and remodelled for the modern orchestra by Kapellmeister Ferdinand Langer, of Mannheim—who has utilised some of Weber's pianoforte compositions to recruit the somewhat scanty score; amongst others the imperishable "Moto Perpetuo" and "Invitation à la Danse"—the opera took the somewhat phlegmatic Hambergers by storm, and gave rise to one of those scenes of rapturous and uncontrollable enthusiasm which are rarely enacted in a German and never in an English opera-house. With his customary liberality and judiciousness, Pollini had cast the opera strongly throughout and set it with tasteful splendour. The title rôle was admirably filled by Frau Lissmann, whilst Frau Garso-Dely, whose fine acting and singing in German Opera at Drury Lane is still fresh in the memory of London music-lovers, sustained the double-part of the tutelary Dryad and the wandering Minnesinger. The hero, Gerolt, was effectively impersonated by Herr Weltlinger, whose robust and somewhat metallic tenor voice was heard to great advantage in music that eminently suited it. Wiegand and Ehrke, accomplished vocalists who also made their mark in this metropolis three years ago, made up the cast. All the principals were recalled half-a-dozen times at the end of each act; and at the close of the opera Pasqué, Langer, Zumpe (the Hamburg *chef d'orchestre*), stage-manager Schmitt, scene-painter Grube, machinist Rosenberg and finally Bernardo Pollini himself were severally summoned before the curtain to receive the recognition their services had so amply merited. It is, indeed, a subject of congratulation to the musical world at large that *Silvana*, after lying in a trance for three-quarters of a century, should have been

awakened from her slumbers and restored to the European operatic répertoire.

An absolute novelty, in the shape of a "Dancing Divertissement" illustrative of the genesis, growth and maturity of the Viennese Waltz, was lately produced with enormous success upon the boards of the Imperial Hofoper in the Kaiserstadt. Just a hundred years had elapsed since the waltz has been danced for the first time on any stage in a comic opera by Martini Solar, called *Una Cosa Rara*, and brought out in Vienna under the title of *Lilla, or Beauty and Virtue*. The waltz at that time went by the name of "Langaus" throughout Germany; on the occasion referred to it was danced by four figurantes dressed in black and pink costumes. Later on the name "Langaus" was changed to "Deutsche" (probably the origin of the term "Germans," by which round dances are still popularly known in the United States) and finally to "Walzer" or waltz. Two of the earliest of these dances, belonging to the pre-Mozartian period, have been preserved to us by the accident that comic verses, still "household words" in Germany, were fitted to them, viz.:—"Ei, du lieber Augustin," and "Hab'ich kein Federbett, schlaf'ich auf Stroh." They were slow, sliding waltzes, the rhythm of the melody being accurately adhered to in step by those who danced them *à trois temps*. It was Weber's "Invitation" (1819) which imparted a fresh impulse to waltz-writing, and inaugurated the golden era of the thorough-bred Viennese Waltz, of which Joseph Lanner and John Strauss the elder were joint and cotemporary originators. Their reign lasted for twenty years, and their most eminent successors were Philip Fahrbach, Lewis Morely, and John Strauss the younger, who is still with us, the honoured and worshipped Walzer-Koenig. Specimens of all these composers' works, as well as of the far more ancient waltzes (formerly intituled "Schleicher" and "G'strampfen") written by Schoebel (1765), and Schanner (1788) for drawing-room dancing, were performed in the *divertissement* above alluded to; and our Vienna musical contemporaries report that the "G'strampfen" in particular were greeted with veritable tempests of applause by a crowded and enthusiastic house; which we can readily believe, for they were played by the finest orchestra in Europe.

FROM THE PROVINCES.

BIRMINGHAM.—"The sacred lamp of pantomime," which brilliantly burnt at the three theatres with which Birmingham is blessed during the earlier part of the month of January cuts the ground from under the feet of concert-givers. Writing now, however, when this "rush" is somewhat over, I am fortunately able just to save my record being a barren one. On the 19th the third of Messrs. Harrison's current concert series became due and it was, of course, properly provided for by that successful firm. As is always the case the artistic personnel was as good as money and opportunity could provide. Madame Alwina Valleria, invariably artistic, and scrupulously conscientious in her work literally, as well as figuratively, headed the list. She sang "Merche dilette amiche," from *I. Vespi Siciliani* magnificently, and both won and received the heartiest recognition for "The harp that once through Tara's Halls." Miss Eleanor Rees, a débutante

here, was slightly handicapped with nervousness, but she managed to give a good account of "O mio Fernando." Madame Antoinette Sterling sang a couple of lieder of Beethoven, "The Lovely Lass of Inverness," and "Highland Laddie." "Love's sweet song," her second contribution, was a very poor specimen of the ordinary "society" ballad. Mr. Redfern Hollins, a painstaking and careful tenor vocalist, gave the melodious aria from *Euryanthe*, "When the orb of day," with fidelity to the text, and sang, "Harry Bluff," a nautical ditty, to the evident appreciation of the large audience. Signor Foli's superb voice was heard to advantage in Blumenthal's dramatic scene, "Across the far blue hills, Marie;" and in "The Wedding of Shon McLean," he fairly "brought down the house." A really good specimen of concerted singing was supplied by the insertion of the cleverly-planned quartet from Boito's *Mefistofele*, "Cavalier so great and learned!" Mr. Clifford Hallé, son of the well-known and deservedly-popular pianist, and conductor also, made the acquaintance of a Birmingham audience on this occasion. There is nothing at all striking either in his voice or method, and certainly in his case *noblesse oblige* will be rather an hindrance than otherwise. So long as people ante-date their expectations of an artiste from the accidents of parentage, will all sorts of differing and different anticipations be formed. On the whole I am inclined to think Mr. Clifford Hallé would have fared quite as well, if not a little better, had some other patronymic been his property. "Revenge, Timotheus cries," his first song, was given with due regard for the demands of scale passages, but there was not the slightest attempt at dramatic characterization. Madame Essipoff once again delighted us with her intellectual exposition of pianoforte music, and Herr Hollman, among 'cellists *facile princeps*, perfectly justified the splendid credentials he came to the "Midland Metropolis" with. Under the careful guidance of Signor Bisaccia, the Concert went as smoothly "as an old glove," and Mr. Percy Harrison, who could challenge almost any *entrepreneur* from "John o' Groats to Land's End" for better arrangements, for his auditorium, was up to his customary "form." —*Torfrida*, given on the 27th by the Midland Musical Society, a dramatic cantata, is the work of a local musician, Mr. W. Moore. He has sought the aid also of a local librettist who hides his identity under the *nom de plume* of Druid Grayl. His book and strophes are supposed to convey the hapless fate of Torfrida, child of Hildebrand and her lover Olaf. Our poet leaves us uncertain as to either locale where, or tempo when, the incidents are supposed to have happened. Judging from internal evidence, when the sea kings exercised almost unrebuted their powers over the northern ocean, was the time, and any part of that terra incognita Norse-land might be pitched upon as the place. With that perversity which distinguished old as well as modern love affairs, the young couple are attached despite the inevitable feud between the families of Hildebrand, Torfrida's father, and Harold, the parent of Olaf. Anxious to meet the maiden, Olaf presents himself at the castle where his fiancée is living, is rather roughly received by her father, but eventually having been promoted "above the salt," is allowed to stay. Repenting of his fit of temporary hospitality, Hildebrand determines to send back his guest when he is asleep, in his galley, and for this purpose summoned his liegemen. Torfrida overhears the plot, and heedless of "proprieties," which perhaps would be condoned under the circumstances, seeks the bed-chamber of her beloved and instantly warns him. Both determine to fly to the convent of St. John, wherever that might be, are overtaken by a

storm, perish in each others arms and of course have the customary dirge sung over them as a general wind-up. Druid Grayl has, on the whole, done his work fairly well; true, his lines are phenomenal neither for metaphor nor for vigour, but they have the virtue of being modest, and, best of all, they scan well and run with smoothness. Mr. Moore arranges his share of the work in nine numbers, rather unequal in length. He begins with a March in B flat major leading to the first chorus, "We sing to the king," a fairly effective piece of plain four part writing. A short recitative and aria for Hildebrand ensues in which one notes the rather uneventful keys of B minor and G minor called "The Raven's Song." Olaf's entrance supplies subject-matter for a rather taking aria "I own the sway of lady fair," and, presently, a spirited dialogue ensues between the two princely personages, in which Torfrida subsequently joins. A trio, "Though oft to me," is superposed upon a chorus for the liegemen, and a carefully constructed *ensemble* finishes the episode. Torfrida's most ambitious aria next succeeds, "The legend of the turre tower," a pretty melody in A flat major. A quartet "O ye unseen" now follows, and, by a not over sensible arrangement, part one ends with a scene from Torfrida sola. The chief points in the second part of the cantata are the storm movement, in which, to say the least, reminiscences of Rossini broadly suggest themselves, and the duet for the fugitives, "Vain, vain your cry," which has a choral substrata, "Stay, stay we pray." It is impossible with the meagre data at hand, and a single experience to speak with anything like certainty on the piece, but enough is at hand to warrant the opinion that *Torfrida* is the work of a careful musician. The themes if not absolutely original, are far from commonplace, and the vocal formulation throughout is sensible and modest. The orchestration is evidently the work of a student, and though not invariably distinguished by the marks of "a cunning artificer," it is suited to the exigencies of the occasion.—I came upon what I consider a bit of treasure-trove by seeing in its MS. dress a part-song for male voices, "Lord Ullin's Daughter," which, curiously enough, through the medium of THE LUTE series of concerted pieces, will shortly be accessible to the world. Why I say treasure-trove is perhaps from a selfish reason. It is my lot to have charge of the music at a large training college for schoolmasters near Birmingham, and every year I am at my wit's end to discover fresh music for male voices. To my *confrères* in similar institutions I would strongly recommend this capital part-song of Mr. Gaul's. As is well-known, he is the author of the *Holy City*, a sacred cantata, which, since its production at the last Birmingham Festival, has circulated "as near as no matter," thirty thousand copies, and certainly this, his latest piece, shows his pen has lost none of its graphic power. Obvious circumstances intervene to prevent a lengthened *résumé* of "Lord Ullin's Daughter," and I must content myself with only pointing out Mr. Gaul's happy treatment of the last verse, where, after a change from G minor to the tonic major he gives the melody to the first tenor, leaving the vocal complement to supply the harmony in subdued chords but not with the device now so hackneyed in its use, "closed lips." Finally, on this subject, may I say "Lord Ullin's Daughter" is underlined for the Musical Society's Annual Dinner for February 11th, at which the composer adventitiously presides, and that this, its first public presentation, will be made by the Bickley Glee Party, a vocal combination which, for balance of tone and excellence of execution, can hold its own against all comers.

CARDIFF given by Town Hall in response College selections Handel, Wieniawski by Professors sang "The manner. promise. violin solo conclusion College Iment at occupied given, and the secon

GLASGOW reaches i will have season is could we of ten we their crav the rema Concert still." Orchestra turn out an organ teaching consider friends w the north doings of be easily The prom engaged season's This is sa prehensive of space at those, to notice hand. Tuesday told his i not carri with the evening programme of th could no must be selection for exam Heckman for two has been Let me interest programme distinct than Bea 13th ult.

CARDIFF.—On the 19th December a violin recital was given by Herr Otto Peiniger at the Assembly Rooms of the Town Hall, to an influential audience who had assembled in response to an invitation from the staff of the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire. The selections comprised movements from the works of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Viotti, Leclan, Spohr, and Wieniawski, and the pianoforte portions were undertaken by Professor Templeton. Mrs. Templeton also assisted, and sang "The Wanderer" and other songs in an admirable manner. The whole of the performances were much appreciated. Herr Peiniger is a young musician of considerable promise. M. Charles Hopkins Ould proved an excellent violin solo accompanist.—On the 20th December, at the conclusion of the session, the South Wales University College Debating Society gave a Concert and Entertainment at the rooms of the College. Professor Wardle occupied the chair, some excellent musical selections were given, and were followed by a burlesque which took up the second part of the programme.

GLASGOW.—By the time the present issue of THE LUTE reaches its readers the Glasgow Choral Union Concerts will have well-nigh been brought to a close. Our musical season is an all too brief one, and many local devotees could well stand an extension of the circumscribed limits of ten weeks. But, meantime, the enthusiasts must control their cravings as best they can. By and bye, however, the remarkable success of the Choral and Orchestral Concert scheme may penetrate "deeper and deeper still." The feeling, indeed, grows that a Resident Orchestra—in the strict acceptation of the term—will turn out at no distant date an accomplished fact. Such an organisation ought to succeed, for there is private teaching in abundance hereabouts, and this important consideration might be seriously weighed by London friends who are inclined to improve their "off-season" in the north. This, however, by the way. The local musical doings of the past few weeks have been confined, it can be easily understood, to the operations of the Choral Union. The promoters of the scheme have, in truth, been diligently engaged in carrying out the obligations contained in the season's prospectus, and, so far, there has been no hitch. This is saying a good deal, when we remember the comprehensive nature of the engagements. The stern limits of space preclude, of course, aught but a mere glance at those, and when there is so much of artistic excellence to notice, the difficulty is to condense the material at hand. Bach and Berlioz have figured in both the Tuesday and Saturday's programmes. The old Cantor told his invaluable story to the admiration of all who are not carried away—temporarily, we venture to believe—with the strange devices of certain modern "gods." One evening the great contrapuntist had the first part of a programme to himself. This was by way of commemoration of the approaching bicentenary. Such an occurrence could not have been overlooked, and the executive must be credited with taste and judgment on the selections placed before their patrons. Those included, for example, the famous "Chaconne" played by Herr Heckmann with rare skill, and the Concerto in D Minor for two violins and orchestra of strings. Berlioz has been heard in orchestral excerpts from his *Faust*. Let me turn now to one or two things of abiding interest which have found place in some recent programmes. Old friends have again laid claim to a distinct hold upon public favour. None more so than Beethoven's C minor symphony. It was played on 13th ult. almost to perfection. Mozart has been repre-

sented by the Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra in D Minor. The favourite work served, moreover, to introduce to a Glasgow audience, that legitimate artiste, Miss Agnes Zimmermann, and with signal acceptance. We have also had several imposing examples of Wagner, notably those submitted at a Saturday "Pop," when the Bayreuth master was heard both at his worst and at his best. Walther's "Prize Song," the introduction to the third act of *The Meistersinger* and "The Ride of the Walkyries" were in the programme, and, by way of *bonne bouche*, old Father Haydn in his "Clock" symphony was as genial and jocose as ever. Raff, by reason of a stimulating performance of the "Lenore," has gained many new friends here, and amongst the overtures heard from time to time Mendelssohn's "Ruy Blas" and "Hebrides," Beethoven's "Leonora," No. 3, and Rossini's "Tell" were prominent examples of finished orchestral playing. A word about some new aspirants for recognition; and, taking these in the order of the programme, Mr. F. H. Cowen's symphony, No. 4 in B flat minor, claims first attention. The popular composer had no reason to feel dissatisfied with the reception which a large audience awarded him, inasmuch as his clever work made a distinctly favourable impression. A similar observation applies to the couple of instrumental movements from Mr. Mackenzie's *Rose of Sharon*, which were brought forward at the fourth Concert of the subscription series. The same evening Brahms's symphony, No. 3 in F, was submitted, and received with that respectful attention which the commemorative ability of the master commands. At the sixth Concert, another bright particular star made no uncertain mark. This was Anton Dvorák, who won a foremost place with his engaging Notturno for strings (Op. 40) and charmed everybody with the exhilarating contents of the Scherzo Capriccioso for orchestra (Op. 66). Another worthy remains to be noted. If last it is certainly not least, as all who have had the good fortune of hearing the "Cologne String Quartet" can well attest. Herr Heckmann and his able coadjutors have appeared twice amongst us, and with an unprecedented measure of success. The good accounts of their interpretation of chamber music had preceded the party. These have been amply verified, and it would be difficult to imagine anything more fascinating than the grace, refinement, and elegance with which the players invested the slow movement from Schubert's favourite D minor quartet. To Mr. August Manns's foresight and energy we are indebted for the visit to this country of Herr Heckmann (who leads so ably our orchestra) and his friends. We have also to again acknowledge the zealous care with which the Crystal Palace *chef* conducts the series of Concerts just passed under brief review. I had almost omitted to note that, during the past month, the following, amongst other vocalists, fully sustained at these Concerts their well-known reputation:—Mesdames Trebelli, Marian McKenzie, Thudichum and Clara Samuell, and Mr. Joseph Maas—who, by the way, is retained to sing at the forthcoming Handel commemoration in Brussels.—Mr. C. McIvor Morrison's new comic opera, *The Uhlans*, was produced at the Royalty Theatre on the 19th inst. Notice is reserved, but, meantime, it may be said that no expense has been spared in placing the tuneful work on the stage. A local chorus of fifty was specially trained by the conductor, Herr Franz Groenings, and the principals included Madame Rose Hersee, Miss Helen Armstrong, Mr. J. W. Turner, and Mr. Charles Lyall.

LIVERPOOL.—Mr. Carl Rosa's Opera season at the Court Theatre, has naturally attracted the principal amount of attention in musical circles during the past month. Opening on Boxing day, the first few nights were devoted to the performance of several old friends who never lose their hold on popular favour, and the first novelty presented was Millocker's *The Beggar Student* with Madame Georgiana Burns as "Laura," and Mr. Ben Davies as "Simon," while Mr. Snazelle earned unbounded applause from his highly artistic impersonation of "General Ollendorff." There has been the usual wail from a section of the press because Mr. Rosa, "with his unrivalled resources," does not confine his attention to grand opera, as if, forsooth, the only *impresario* who combines enterprise with discretion had not sufficient common sense to be aware that the bulk of his patrons are not such as choose to regale themselves solely with—figuratively speaking—roast beef. The success which this gay and lively opera has attained upon the several occasions upon which it has been repeated, is sufficient answer to such objections. Boito's *Mefistofele*, also a novelty here, has also been received with much favour. The setting of the operas has been liberal in the extreme, and in the new productions, especially in *Manon*, noticed elsewhere, the dresses and scenery have been really magnificent. Madame Marie Roze has strengthened her hold upon the taste of Liverpool opera-goers, and not only does her voice increase in brilliancy, but she is rapidly becoming a dramatic artiste of a very high order. The band and chorus have been excellent beyond the usual average, and, with this maintained, as it undoubtedly will be, and with the strong company named in last month's notes, there can be little doubt of the success of Mr. Rosa's London season.—Mr. F. H. Gowen's "Welsh" Symphony was played with much success at the Philharmonic Concert on January 6th, and on the 13th ult., Dr. Hallé produced Dvorák's Symphony in D. At this latter Concert, Signor Piatti played with his usual excellence and brilliancy, and Miss Mary Davies was the vocalist.—The Philharmonic Choral Society, who have appointed Mr. J. H. Turvey as their secretary, in place of Mr. F. W. P. Rutter, announce the performance of *Judas Maccabaeus* in celebration of the bi-centenary of the birth of Handel.—Professor Macfarren has accepted the presidency of the newly-formed Liverpool Association of Professional Musicians, and, at the inaugural dinner, a few days ago, made a really excellent speech, which should be of value to the members.—The serious illness of Mr. W. T. Best has necessitated his resignation of the post of organist of West Derby parish church which he has held for many years. In the meantime, temporarily it is to be hoped, his place at the weekly recitals on St. George's Hall organ will be filled by local organists of repute to be hereafter chosen by the corporation.

MANCHESTER.—We are having, what with concerts, operas, and organ recitals, quite a plethora of music this winter, and certainly much more than can be supported. Of course during the last month we have had *The Messiah* almost to excess. Mr. Hallé gave his two annual performances with Madame Albani, Madame Patey, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Santley as principals, and 'more perfect ones, in every way, could not have been given. M. de Jong also gave his annual performance with Madame Valleria, Madame Patey, Mr. Joseph Maas, and Signor Foli in the principal parts. Every time the oratorio has been given the Free Trade Hall has been crowded. On Friday, January 2nd, Mr. Hallé gave a most

brilliant performance, which we have said to be annual, of Berlioz's *Faust*. M. de Jong's Concerts have been principally noticeable for the appearance of Mr. Sims Reeves on January 3rd. Mr. Reeves was in splendid voice and raised the enthusiasm of his audience to the utmost pitch. At the Gentlemen's Concerts, Mr Clifford Hallé, a son of our much respected conductor, Mr. Charles Hallé, made his first appearance as a vocalist. He has evidently been well trained, and makes the most of a good baritone voice. The pianoforte recitals at the Gentlemen's Concerts have been well attended.—Herr Kayser, of Hagen in Westphalia has given three Organ Recitals on the Town Hall organ. While he possesses the most brilliant powers of execution, he altogether lacks the taste for, or faculty of, varying the stops, so that his playing, coupled with the fact that in every programme there were four or five fugues, was decidedly monotonous.—Mr. Farmer's "Royal English Opera Company" have, for some time past, been giving operas in the new Comedy Theatre, with considerable success as regards the performances, but not as regards the audiences. His repertoire includes such important works as *Don Giovanni*, *Figaro*, *Satanella*, and *Crown Diamonds*, and he also performed on Saturday James Lortzing's *Peter the Shipwright*, better known as *Czar and Zimmerman*, for the first time in Manchester. The "Comedy," in Peter Street, which was opened just before Christmas, is a most charming theatre, and its acoustic properties are excellent, but how all the places of amusement (we have now five large theatres), can be made to pay remains to be seen.

NEWPORT.—On 11th December, at the Albert Hall, a Concert of a very interesting character was given by the Cardiff Choral Society. In consequence of the inclement state of the weather the audience was small. The programme was as follows:—Chorus, "And the Glory of the Lord" (Handel), by the choir; song, "The Chord of Love" (Behrend), Miss Bella Atkinson; violin obbligato, Mr. J. Lane Herbert; grand march, "Tannhäuser" (Wagner), the Penarth Volunteer Artillery Band; glee, "When winds breathe soft" (Welbe), the Choir; clarinet solo, Second Air Varie (J. Mohr), Mr. C. Draper and the band; song, Miss B. M. Foster; violin solo, (a) Adagio (Sainton) and (b) Moderato and Presto (De Beriot), Mr. J. Lane Herbert; chorus, "Hallelujah" (Handel), the Society. Part II.—Russian Dance, "Pas des Patineurs" (Glinka), the Band; piccolo obbligato, Sergt. Lewis; song, "The child's letter to Heaven" (Levy), Miss Isabella Howard Jones; chorus, "Thanks be to God" (Mendelssohn), the Society; overture, "Semiramide" (Wellings), Miss Clara Rees; violin obbligato, Mr. J. Lane Herbert; piccolo solo, "Danse des Satyrs" (C. Le Thiere), Sergt. Lewis and Band; chorus, "And then shall your light" (Mendelssohn), the Society; National Anthem. The choir was under the conductorship of Mr. D. C. Davies.

SOUTHPORT.—On Christmas Day two Concerts were given in the Pavilion. At the sacred Concert in the afternoon Mr. Snazelle gave Gounod's *Nazareth* and H. Parker's *Jerusalem* with excellent effect, while other selections were performed by the Pavilion Orchestra under the clever direction of Mr. A. E. Baisle, assisted by Mesdames Joyce Maas and Anderson. In the evening a miscellaneous selection was given before a large audience by the same artists.—The third of Mr. J. S. Watson's Subscription Concerts will be given on February 10th.

THE Massene many m achieved January and artis first act Here all given for commen and an whereup a room i perfect b popular Manon and prett of trades Paris. T seminary a fashion final scen The wor be term full of i talent required is above afflatus w Deep cho and most points to enriched calculated the most and acted yellows sk Des Grieu yet given have bee picture, morceaux act the and lowly passion. Mr. de Guillot, for his car the Comte and efficie Clara Pe Mr. Rosa over the in the extr unequivoc to be don themselves Rosa's sea

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"MANON."

(FROM OUR LIVERPOOL CORRESPONDENT.)

THE production for the first time in England of Massenet's latest opera has been looked forward to for many months with the greatest interest, and the result achieved at the Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool, on January 17th last, is a brilliant testimony to the enterprise and artistic sagacity of Mr. Carl Rosa. The scene of the first act is laid in the courtyard of an Inn in Amiens. Here all the characters are introduced, and occasion is given for some very effective scoring in a song for Manon, commencing, "A simple maid fresh from lov'd home," and an exquisite duet between the lovers is introduced, whereupon follows the elopement. Act the second is in a room in Paris, and this will, in all probability, from the perfect beauty of its musical setting, become the most popular portion of the work. In the third act, where Manon is shown as a brilliant courtesan, a gay and pretty opening number is given, representing a chorus of tradesfolk at an outdoor fête in the Cour de la Reine, Paris. The second portion of this act, taking place in the seminary of St. Sulpice, is full of powerful and absorbing dramatic interest. Act IV., in the first scene, represents a fashionable gaming house in Paris, and in the last and final scene (which is a separate act in the French original) the death of Manon is shown on the way to the galleys. The work throughout is one which, in every respect, may be termed a fine type of the modern lyric school. It is full of individuality and power, and while showing that the talented composer possesses the scientific knowledge required to produce a truly symmetrical piece of work, it is above and beyond that perfectly clear that the divine afflatus which gives life, is also present in a large degree. Deep chords are at one time touched, and then the liveliest and most joyful of strains, while the general conclusion points to the fact that our list of lyric dramas has been enriched by a work of conspicuous beauty, and one calculated to hold its own for many years, even against the most popular of its rivals. Madame Marie Rôze sang and acted the part of the capricious Manon with marvellous skill and brilliancy, and Mr. Barton McGuckin's Des Grieux is undoubtedly the finest impersonation he has yet given. Even his greatest admirers could scarcely have been prepared for so powerful and tender a stage picture, whilst his delivery of some of the exquisite morceaux allotted to the character—notably the song in act the second, "With closed eyes I saw a sweet and lowly cot"—was marked with rare delicacy and passion. Mr. Ludwig was a powerful Lescaut, and Mr. de Solla presented a clever picture of the roué Guillot. Mr. Burgon earned much commendation for his careful and tuneful rendering of the music set for the Comte des Grieux. Other characters were carefully and efficiently filled by Mr. Hallan and Misses Bensburg, Clara Perry and Marian Burton. Needless to say that Mr. Rosa has expended an infinitude of care and expense over the mounting and accessories which are brilliant in the extreme. Finally, the chronicling of a success as unequivocal as it was well deserved is the only thing left to be done, and metropolitan opera-goers may promise themselves a signal pleasure during the course of Mr. Rosa's season at old Drury.

MR. SINCLAIR DUNN, the Scottish tenor, has been engaged to create the part of Arany in Herr Bonawitz's new opera, *Irma*, at St. George's Hall, with Mdme. Rose Hersee in the title rôle.

REVIEWS.

KEPPEL AND CO.

No. I. *Royal March*. For the Pianoforte. By Joseph Roeckel.

No. II. *Old Chelsea*. Quaint Dance. For the Pianoforte. By Joseph Roeckel.

BOTH these pieces are musicianly, effective and by no means difficult. In No. 2, the composer has not only imitated the structure, but has successfully reflected the spirit of the old-fashioned gavotte. These publications are both admirably adapted for teaching purposes.

Bright Days of my Childhood. Song. Words by Mrs. Pitt Draffen. Music by John Thomas.

THIS song, albeit unpretending, cannot fail to please by reason of its flowing melody and natural harmonies. It may be strongly recommended for drawing-room use.

We've Said Farewell. Song. Words by Madame Rosita Foli. Music by Tito Mattei.

MR. MATTEI has dealt very happily with Madame Foli's pathetic verses, for not only is the melody fittingly appropriate, but the accompaniment gives the song distinct musical value. Contralto singers will find here something eminently worthy of attention.

PATEY AND WILLIS.

The National Book of Hymn Tunes, Chants and Kyries. Containing upwards of one thousand compositions never before published. Edited by William Arthur Jefferson (Fellow of the College of Organists).

THE title "National" is claimed for this work on the ground that the whole of the material is new, and comprises examples from the pens of the Professors of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin and Edinburgh, and of other well-known writers, forming a complete exposition of modern British musical thought and feeling.

Every praise must be given to this volume on the score of comprehensiveness, for whilst it can be used as a supplement to existing works of a similar character, it is, at the same time, a complete Tune, Chant and Kyrie book in itself, and can be used independently. From the great care bestowed upon this publication, its compilation has evidently been to its editor a labour of love as well as of time and thought, and to him the hearty thanks are due of all those interested in modern Church music, for this fresh and vigorous addition to its repertoire. That the "National Book" cannot fail to be popular is certain, since it contains examples ranging from the simple compositions suited for congregational use to those elaborate ones specially designed for Cathedral choirs. The Queen has graciously accepted a copy of this work.

At the Fair. Song. Words and music by Luscombe Searell.

A PRETTY rustic love story, after the style of "Twickenham Ferry." Prettily told both in verse and music.

W. J. WILLCOCKS AND CO.

No. 1. *La Jeunesse*. Polka. Par Aigrette. No. 2. *Jeu d'Esprit* (in Polka form). By H. C. Burnham. No. 3.

Valse de Salon. By Frank Austin. No. 4. *Mazurka.*
By Otto Schweizer.

No. 1. A bright and agreeable if by no means an original Polka. No. 2. A brilliant little piece, of moderate difficulty. No. 3. A pretty drawing room trifle which will well repay attention. No. 4. Nothing in this piece calls for special remark, but it is showy, and will afford a capital exercise in rhythm.

POHLMANN AND SONS.

Drei Stucke. No. 1. Minuet. No. 2. Gondellied. No. 3. Valse Caprice. For Violin and Pianoforte. By Alfred F. Christensen.

ALL these pieces are unambitious in character, but although simply written are both melodious and pleasing—No. 2, Gondellied, specially so. To amateurs they will be both welcome and useful.

STANLEY, LUCAS, WEBER AND CO.

Love that hath us in the Net. Song. Words by Lord Tennyson. Music by E. Hatzfield. Opus 2.

A SIMPLE and pretty setting of Tennyson's well-known verses.

ANTON DVORAK, urged thereto by English appreciation of his genius, has been diligently studying the English language with considerable success. When last over here he could not speak or write a single word of it; he has now written a letter to a friend couched in very passable Anglo-Saxon.

MR. VICTOR BENHAM gave a pianoforte recital on the 21st January at the Prince's Hall, Piccadilly. This young gentleman (he is only 16 years of age), has already an American and French reputation, and so far as one can judge from his initial performance, he bids fair to gain the good opinion of music lovers of this country. His programme included selections from the works of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, Schumann, Chopin, and Liszt, all played from memory. His execution is very fine.

ON the occasion of the first appearance in Vienna of Herr Pollini's "discovery," Herr Bötel, a good thing was said by one of the members of the orchestra. After congratulating the *impresario*, he remarked, with great impressiveness, "You have made a tolerable singer out of a cab-driver. One other thing you must do, and you will earn the undying gratitude of the artistic world." "What is that?" "You have now to prevail upon the majority of our singers to take up the honourable and suitable profession of cab-drivers!"

AT the first Popular Concert of Mr. Michael Watson's Choir, which meets for practice at the new Public Hall, Peckham, the choir sang Mendelssohn's "Departure," Faning's "Vikings," and two compositions by their conductor—"Bridal Chorus from Aladdin" and "The gallant Troubadour." At the last Popular Concert (January 5th), they sang the choruses in Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and several part-songs, in a manner reflecting great credit on the choir generally. Concerts are announced by Mr. Michael Watson for Ash Wednesday (*Stabat Mater* and selections from the Oratorios), and Good Friday (*Elijah*).

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POET'S CORNER.

THREE WISHES.

WOULD I were the scarlet flower
That lies upon your breast,
To revel, if but for an hour,
In rapturous unrest ;
At ev'ry pulse's beat to start,
To tremble at each sigh—
To hear the beatings of your heart
And, cradled thus, to die.

I would I were a mirror bright
Vouchsafed the special grace
Of serving you by day and night
Just to reflect your face.
Yea, turned to glass I fain would be ;
In me might then be seen,
Whene'er you deigned to look at me,
Your other self, I ween !

I have a third fond wish to tell,
And, could I hope that you
Would ever grant it, I might well
Renounce the other two.
If to such bliss I dared aspire
All else I would resign
To realise my heart's desire—
It is that you were mine !

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WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

MR. JOSEPH BENNETT sailed from New York on the 28th ult. on board the *Pavonia* and, unless his plans were at the last moment altered, he should arrive in Liverpool on the 7th or 8th instant.

FOR no stated reason, the members of the Moscow Opera recently refused to sing with Madame Pauline Lucca and Signor Mierzwinski, and the two artists will, it is said, bring an action against the management.

A CERTAIN pianist is credited with having performed, during last year, at no fewer than 237 concerts, soirées, and "at homes," sometimes having four engagements a day. What would his answer be to the question: Is life worth living?

AMERICAN, of course. "Now, darling, will you grant me one favour before I go?" "Yes, George, I will," she said, dropping her lashes and getting her lips into shape. "Only a little song at the piano, love; I am afraid there is a dog outside waiting for me, and I want to frighten him away."

SCRAPE a Russian and you find a Tartar. Mdlle. Van Zandt has evidently not gone beneath the surface, for she has experienced nothing but the greatest courtesy and kindness during her stay in St. Petersburg. To be applauded by the Emperor and Empress and their entire court, and to be re-called thirty (?) times at her débüt must have been a welcome change to the mean scandal-mongering and petty spites and jealousies of Parisian cliques.

